

# **Obesity Prevention Grants Program**

**Presented to**

***National Institutes of Environmental  
Health Sciences***

**Environmental Solutions to Obesity in America's  
Youth Conference ~ June 1-2, 2005**

**Presented by Luwanda Jenkins, Community Relations  
Manager**

**CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield**

## Obesity: A Critical Health Need

- **Fact:** Studies show an increase in mortality rate due to obesity. Obese individuals have a 50-100% increased risk of death from all causes as compared to normal weight individuals. Current lifestyle trends, including reduced physical activity, have caused an alarming increase in obesity in the U.S.
- Obesity is linked to morbidity from more than 30 conditions. Several of the more serious conditions include:
  - \* Asthma \* Birth Defects \* Cancers \* Cardiovascular Disease
  - \* Diabetes \* Hypertension \* Stroke

Source: NIH, *Clinical Guidelines on the Identification, Evaluation and Treatment of Overweight and Obesity in Adults*

### Childhood Obesity Stats:

- **Children are a fast growing segment:** 15% of children/teens ages 6-19 are overweight
- **Income May Make a Difference:** Adolescents from poorer families (below 130% of the federal poverty threshold) are twice as likely to be overweight (16%)
- **Race & Ethnicity Matter:** Latino and African-American youth are impacted at higher rates: 27% of Latino male teens and 26% of African-American young women are overweight.

Source: The Center for Health and Health Care in Schools

## Grants Program

### Goal:

- To address the issue of obesity and associated health risks by funding innovative programs that promote physical activity, proper nutrition and healthy lifestyles

### Approach:

- Proactively seek proposals to fund healthy lifestyle programs in MD, DC and DE

**Budget:** \$500,000 to be awarded in grants ranging from \$25,000-\$50,000

### Process:

- RFPs were sent to over 200 non-profit, health focused organizations in Maryland, Delaware and the District of Columbia (*CareFirst's service area*)

## Evaluation Criteria

### Proposals will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- How well does the project address obesity prevention?  
[ 3 components: fitness, nutrition & education ]
- Scope of project (targeted population affected, number of individuals served, geographic requirement-MD, DC, or Northern VA focus)
- Use of evidence/research based practices incorporated in the project.
- Organizational capacity and experience with administering successful programs
- Projects must be scheduled to start by September 2004.
- Project outcome measures

## Funded Programs- Childhood Obesity Focused

- A cohort of (13) projects totaling \$535,000 were funded

### Grantee Organizations by Target Population Grouping

Target Population	Organization Name
<b>Children and Youth</b> <i>(8 programs funded)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Allegany County Public Schools (W. MD)</li><li>•Baltimore City Medical Soc.(Balto.City Schools)</li><li>•Christiana Care (DE Elementary School)</li><li>•DC Scores (after school programs)</li><li>•Greater Mt. Calvary (teen girls)</li><li>•Johns Hopkins Univ. Nursing (2-middle schools)</li><li>•Joy of Sports (DC Charter Schools)</li><li>•YMCA-DC (youth &amp; family fitness &amp; nutrition)</li></ul>
<b>Adults</b> <i>( 4 programs funded)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•American Heart Association-DC/N.VA</li><li>•Calvert Memorial Hosp(S. MD-Walking program)</li><li>•Open Gates Health Center (women's fitness)</li></ul>
<b>Senior Adults</b> <i>( 2 programs funded)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Family &amp; Children Services-DC</li><li>•Evergreen Cove Holistic Learning Center (E.Shore MD)</li></ul>

## Interim Status Report on 13 Grantees

- **Overview of ShapeUp LiveWell Programs:**

- All thirteen organizations report progress towards their short-term outcomes
- All thirteen organizations have started implementing their programs
- All thirteen organizations have collected baseline data
- Four of the thirteen organizations have collected interim data
- Seven of the thirteen organizations have met or exceeded the number of people they had originally intended to serve. Four of the thirteen organizations have not yet met their participation targets and two of the thirteen organizations have not yet provided participation data
- Of the twelve organizations that were interviewed, all reported progress on short-term outcomes. Most of this progress was reported as changes in attitude, knowledge and behavior .

**Case Review of a Childhood Obesity  
Grant funded project**

- **Allegany County Public Schools**

Program Name: Middle School Fitness &  
Nutritional Program

Grant Amount: \$40,000

Number Served: 177 (8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> grade students)

- **Scope of Project**

To provide fitness training and nutritional education to students in grades 8-9 for one school year. Progress will be monitored and recorded via a Fitness Report Card.

## Data Summary – Allegany County Public Schools

	Baseline Summary Data	End of Program/Interim Summary Data
Total # of Participants	36.5	37
Average Weight	133.6	137.3
Average BMI	23.4	24
Avg. Total Fitness Level	2.5	2.8
Avg. Curl-up Score	51.3	56.1
Avg. Sit-and-Reach Score	10.8	11.2
Avg. Push-up Score	12	13.4
Avg. Trunk Lift Score	8.25	10.3
Avg. Pacer Score	27	28



## Case Study #3 Cont. – Allegany County Public Schools

### Short-term Impact of Program

- General changes among students include positive comments about fitness activities and constant inquiry about what activities are in progress or scheduled.
- Participating students are more aware of healthier dietary choices but again these decisions are based on various external factors. Factors include: time, peer pressure, family and home life situations.
- Students are paying more attention to their caloric intake.
- Participating students are more aware of the fitness statistics and scores needed to achieve the higher levels in each of the fitness tests. They have become competitive among themselves and constantly compare their scores. They are less concerned with their weight and more focused on their body fat percentage and BMI scores.
  - Students have indicated more family involvement in activities such as walking, jogging, aerobics and other fitness activities.
  - Community members and school faculty are also using the fitness equipment at each school

## Preliminary Observation

- Working with school age kids in 'in-school' programs appears to be effective. The frequency of intervention may be correlated to program success. Allegany County Public Schools' program interacts with children on a daily basis whereas many other grantee programs work with participants on a less frequent, weekly basis.
- While it is too early to assess long-term impact of any of all funded programs, the programs appear to be changing participants' outlook on health and fitness which is the first step towards achieving longer-term health related outcomes.

## **Preliminary Observations, Cont.**

- Working with children may lead to greater fitness gains, however, we can not say this conclusively because it appears that children are able to be targeted at a much higher frequency during in-school physical education and health programs.
- Allegany County Public Schools, the recipient of the largest grant (\$40,000) was able to interact with participants on a more frequent basis than the other two programs. While all three programs have reported positive interim results, the ability to have more frequent interaction may influence participation rates and overall program impact.
- When working with older populations, many factors (i.e. transportation, personal health, health of family members, work, etc.) influence ability to participate.

## What Next

### Basic Assumptions:

- CareFirst remains committed to addressing obesity
- Mid-term progress suggests that overall, projects are going well
- Provided there is consensus & support to fund a 2<sup>nd</sup> round the following should be considered

### Next Steps:

- Continue to monitor progress of grantee organizations (ongoing)
- Collect end-of-program data from all grantee organizations by July 2005
- Write a final report for CareFirst summarizing the short-term impact of the *ShapeUp LiveWell* Initiative by September 2005
- Make determination about future funding for *ShapeUp LiveWell*